

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
MAY 18, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,
Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Ted Munford, Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Bert Clark, Travis Allan. Mayor Sonja Norton was excused.

WELCOME: Bert welcomed everyone to the meeting.

SELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEMPORE: Councilmember Dave Everett moved to appoint Councilmember Bert Clark as the Mayor Pro Tempore for this meeting. Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Allan, Munford, Scott and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.

INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT: An invocation was given by Councilmember Bert Clark.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Samantha Scott.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2016 SPECIAL APPEAL BOARD MEETING: *Councilmember Samantha Scott moved to approve the minutes of May 3, 2016. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Allan, Everett, Scott, and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2016 REGULAR MEETING: *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of May 4, 2016. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Allan, Everett, Scott, and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.*

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF PEHP PLAN RENEWAL AGREEMENT: Ken Bassett explained that this agreement is for the employee's dental insurance plan. The City has been covered by Public Employees Health Plan (PEHP) for many years, and this plan is tied to the State Retirement System. There are not a lot of preferred providers when it comes to dental plans which makes it challenging. There is a 3% increase in the rates this year. Mayor Pro Temp Bert Clark asked Mr. Bassett to identify the differences between the two dental plans offered. Ken Bassett explained that the traditional plan has a deductible and offers \$1500 of coverage per family member per year. The other plan, premium choice, does not have a deductible and offers \$2000 of coverage per year. An open enrollment meeting will be held in June. After further discussion, Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the PEHP agreement for dental insurance. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Scott, Clark, Munford and Allan voting in favor.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF HEALTH INSURANCE PARTICIPATION FOR FY2017: Ken Bassett reminded the Council that at the budget workshop held on Monday the Council discussed the percentage of participation of the City for the employee's health insurance

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premiums. There is a 7.5% increase in rates this year. The Council asked for additional information, particularly what percentage other local governments are paying. Mr. Bassett gave the Council a tabulation sheet showing the percentage paid by other entities. He explained that Naples City has a two-tier system, paying 100% of the cost for the employee, and 80% for families. Uintah County pays 90%, Duchesne County pays 80%, Roosevelt City is currently at 100%, however, the finance director indicated they are considering having the employees pick up some of the cost. Councilmember Dave Everett explained that he has had a lot of discussion with citizens who think the employees should pay more of the cost for their insurance. He recommended the percentage that the City pays be changed to 85% to save funds. He commented that he was aware that the amount the employees pay likely will never go back down. Councilmember Ted Munford stated that if benefits are decreased 0, chances of returning is zero. With no pay increases this year, it would be better to leave the benefits the same which is in line with other entities. Councilmember Travis Allan agreed that if there are no raises, the Council should support employees by contributing to the benefits in the same way the City has been contributing. If the benefits are offered, there is no tax cost to the employees. He suggested other items be cut from the budget first as this would hurt moral. Further, Councilmember Allan stated he is learning there is a fine line between taxing too much and offering services citizens want. Councilmember Samantha Scott agreed if the City does not have to cut benefits, they shouldn't be cut. Councilmember Bert Clark noted that the departments have been conservative, and he did not want to take anything away from the employees. Councilmember Ted Munford moved to keep the percentage that the City pays for health insurance benefits the same. Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Allanaye;
Councilmember Everettnay;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;
Councilmember Clark.....aye.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2ND

PUBLIC HEARING: Ken Bassett reminded the Council that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program was initiated by the Federal Government to give funds to local governments for improvements in their communities. For many years the emphasis was on housing projects, especially those serving low to moderate income households. Over the last 25 years, the City has been able to complete many projects using these funds including public works projects. This year, the project that was chosen is repairs to the Golden Age Manor senior apartment complex located at 350 North 200 West. This complex is owned and operated by the Uintah Basin Assistance Council and contains 12 units. The application went through the rating and ranking process and was awarded \$31,000. The project will include repaving the parking lot, fixing the sidewalk, and improving the outside lighting. Mayor Pro Tempore Bert Clark opened the public hearing for comments to allow citizens to provide input concerning this project that was awarded CDBG funding. Ken Bassett stated there are three separate buildings, and this project

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will greatly improve this senior housing. Further, this project has been included as part of the City's capital improvement plan as part of the ongoing effort to improve low to moderate housing in the City. Copies of that plan are available for review. Councilmember Bert Clark asked if the lighting will be changed to LED lights. Ken Bassett answered yes, that is part of the project. There were no further public comments and the public hearing was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING: FY2017 BUDGET: Mayor Pro Tempore Bert Clark opened the public hearing for public comment. Ken Bassett explained the City Council has started the budget meetings to go over the budget in more detail before the final budget is approved. He noted that there is not a lot of interest from the public in participating in the meetings. He reminded the Council as they are asked about City taxes, the City has one of the lowest property tax rates in the State. Most of the revenue for the City comes from sales tax. Councilmember Bert Clark asked the staff to explain who receives the largest portion of the property taxes. Ken Bassett stated Uintah County and the Uintah School District are the biggest property tax collectors. Also, there are several special districts including Water, Mosquito Abatement and Central Utah Water Conservancy District that collects property tax. The oil and gas industry is very significant to the local economy, and when it struggles, the taxes go down. Bruce Tibbets, news reporter, asked the Council if there was anything that surprised them from the budget. Councilmember Clark stated as they go into the budget meetings, there is a want list and a need list. This year the want list has been set aside. He credited the staff with keeping their expenses down. Mr. Tibbets asked if the Council wished there were more community input from citizens on the budget. Councilmember Clark stated over the years there has been zero participation from the public, and he would like to see more. Councilmember Dave Everett stated this is one of the most important things the Council does. It is what they are elected to do, and he would like to know if the citizens are satisfied with the job they are doing. Councilmember Munford noted that many times community members think they do not have a voice, that it does not matter, however, the Council would love to get feedback. Councilmember Travis Allan stated although he is new to this role, he is not surprised, but is impressed how willing the departments are to finding ways to cut their budgets. He noted that as an elected official, it is their responsibility to listen to the citizens, and he would love to hear their concerns. Bruce Tibbets asked if anything stood out as they looked over the budget. Councilmember Allan stated that generally, the departments willingness to cut their budgets. Ken Bassett noted that as the Council looks at the infrastructure of the community including streets, lighting, water lines etc. those area are critical and must be maintained. With the budgeting issues, it is tougher to maintain these items. Mike Davis stated the budget is now available on line by clicking on the link with the newspaper article. There being no further discussion, the hearing was closed.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF ASHLEY CREEK VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE APPROVAL: Ken Bassett explained that when a development is completed, many times the developer asks the City to accept the public improvements to maintain. In this specific development the developer is asking the City to take over the water lines, sewer lines and streets. He brought the Council's attention to Mr. Parker's memo indicating the infrastructure has been inspected and meets all requirements of the City even though there is no curb and gutter by the

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turn around as the street will continue through. Councilmember Dave Everett moved to accept the infrastructure of Ashley Creek Village. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Munford, Clark Scott and Allan voting in favor.

REQUEST TO AMEND THE PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL – REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS PROGRAM – RESOLUTION NO. 2016-11: Ken Bassett explained that this Resolution adds reasonable accommodations to the personnel policies to comply with different segments of the State law that was recently passed. The policy already provide accommodations for disabilities, and now will include accommodations for issues of pregnancy, child birth and breastfeeding. Councilmember Travis Allan moved to approve Resolution Mo. 2016-11. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Allanaye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;
Councilmember Clark.....aye.

DECISION OF VERNAL CITY APPEALS BOARD: Ken Bassett explained that the City Attorney, Dennis Judd, is requesting the final decision of the Appeal Board in the matter of Russel Augustus be made part of the record. Roxanne Behunin read the final decision of the Appeal Board as follows:

Ballot question #1: Do the facts support the charges made by the department head? The Board voted yes, with five ballots yes and zero ballots no;

Ballot question #2: If you find that the employee violated one or more of the Vernal City policies stated in the termination notice, did the City Manager abuse his discretion or exceed his authority in terminating the employee? The Board voted no, with five ballots no and zero ballots yes, for a unanimous decision.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Drains:

Councilmember Bert Clark stated he had a discussion with Trent McKeachnie with UDOT, and he is wondering who is responsible for the maintenance of the drain on 500 North from the baseball fields to the west. Ken Bassett stated he would get with him.

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ADJOURN: There being no further business, Councilmember Dave Everett moved to adjourn. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.

ATTEST:

Mayor Pro Tempore Bert Clark

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

(S E A L)